

The Williams House
30 Ashwood Terrace
West Orange, Essex County, New Jersey

HABS-NJ-624

HABS
N.J.

7-ORAW.

1.

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, F.A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

HABS
NJ.

7. DRAW

The Williams House
30 Ashwood Terrace
West Orange, Essex County, New Jersey

Owner: Alison P. Clark (1938)

Date of Erection: 1813

Architect:

Builder: John and Nathaniel Williams

Present Condition: Demolished in Summer of 1939

Number of Stories: One and one-half with basement

Materials of Construction: Foundation - coursed ashlar
stone masonry

Exterior walls - timber
frame stone filled, clap-
board facing

Interior walls - lath and
plaster on studding

Chimneys - two built into
inside of each gable end
brick

Roof - gable without dormers
(originally) wood shingle
roofing

Historical Data:

By a deed of 8 March 1813, Moses Tichenor of Orange Township, Essex County, and wife Dorcas, conveyed to John Williams and Nathaniel Williams, both of that place, for \$474.87 a tract of some 13 acres in Bloomfield Township, bounded east by lands of John Wright, north by

those of Phineas Crane and said Williams, westerly by those of Stephen Tichenor, and southerly by those of Lewis Crane, Stephen and Abiah Dodd.

Ten days later, by a deed of 18 March, Stephen Tichenor likewise of Orange Township, with wife Jane, conveyed to the same John and Nathaniel Williams for \$114.18 the 3.15 acre tract lying adjacent west of the one above described by which they acquired a frontage of some 632 feet on the southeast side of the "road leading from Zenas Williams to Cranetown". John Williams, one of these two grantees, with his wife Joanna conveyed to the other, Nathaniel Williams, by deed of 28 April 1814 some 10 acres of the 16 in the combined two tracts, being the lower half and eastern end thereof. John Williams further conveyed to Nathaniel the 3 acre tract adjacent on the south and also fronting on the said road by his deed of 11 April 1820. Nathaniel Williams devised the house to his wife during her lifetime and ordered it to be sold after her death in order to satisfy his debts.

James R. Williams of Orange Township, an heir of Nathaniel Williams the abovenamed grantee, conveyed by deed of 27 June 1857 to Charles Williams of the same place, one-seventh part of the estate of the late Nathaniel Williams deceased, on the easterly side of the Eagle Rock Road, containing about one acre. Ira Condit bought a seventh part interest in the homestead from Abraham C. Taylor who had bought from Silas Williams in 1847, a son of said Nathaniel and Condit with wife Phoebe F., of Orange Township, conveyed the same to Charles Williams of same place. And Elias M. Baldwin and wife Joanna conveyed to him by theirs of 14 Sept. 1863 the part of the homestead of the late Nathaniel Williams decd., lying east of Eagle Rock Road and north of a private road to the former tanyard of Charles and Edward Williams, being 1/4 acre with the house.

Charles Williams having thus reassembled the real estate of Nathaniel Williams decd., with his wife Amelia gave deed on 11 October 1866 to Edward Williams, conveying the three tracts in the township of West Orange as above described.

On 10 April 1899, Alfred G. Williams and wife Josephine quit claimed to his sisters Anne E. and Marian Williams all his right in the unsold real estate of their father Edward Williams decd., and by deed of same date, James Austin Williams and wife Mary R., conveyed to the said grantees five tracts, the estate of his father Edward Williams.

Accordingly, Anne E. and Marian Williams of the city of Orange, Essex County, conveyed to Margaret J. and Mary L. Kelly, both of West Orange Township, by their deed of 1st May 1923, part of the land of their late father, Edward Williams, describing it as bounded north by Ashwood Terrace, south by land of Ezra Williams and the Washington Playground, east by land of Cooper and west by that of Chapman. The house here surveyed stands on this part of the original estate.

Margaret J. and Mary L. Kelly of West Orange Township, the grantees last named, conveyed the same to Matthew J. Treacey of Newark, by their Deed of 17 August 1925, and he devised it to Helen Treacey who by her deed of 27 August 1926 conveyed it to Jennie Notte and husband, of Newark. Frank Notte and wife Irene, of Millsdale, Union County, passed the same to Charles S. Orben of Newark, by deed of 8 August 1927. By a decree of Chancery Court filed 5 July 1938, the property passed from Charles Orben to Allison F. Clark.

Architectural Analysis:

The formal balanced plan of this house, a front and a rear chamber on each side of a central stairhall, each of these four rooms having a fireplace in the gable end wall, was characteristic of late 18th century and later domestic architecture

in New Jersey. This example was not typical of most of the work in that period in having originally an unfinished garret instead of a second story of full head room at the eaves and with dormers on the roof for an attic above.

The design and detail of the wood pilastered mantels in rooms numbered one and three on the survey drawings, as also of the six panel passage doors from hall to those rooms, and of the stairway all ascribe the date of erection to the early 19th century.

But in the so-called Greek Revival period of 1815-1840, the four windows of the front were inserted to replace the original ones as likewise were the portico at the front door and the triple window above it.

The ungainly effect of this portico was the result of later removing its two columns and substituting the large brackets applied to the pilasters at the wall. The two panel passage doors from hall to dining room are further changes during the phase of remodeling mentioned above.

The lean-to annex at the east gable end was of modern construction as indicated on the survey drawings. Evidently this had replaced the original kitchen service wing. Likewise modern erections were the two story wing and porch at the rear, the bay windows of the second story in each gable end.

In design, this house resembled that of the Henry Osborn House (NJ-618) at 506 Stuyvesant Avenue, Irvington, Essex County, which by coincidence likewise had its front windows and central entrance remodelled in the Greek fashion.

Bibliography:

Search of title in Essex County Land
and Probate records by Cornelius McPhillips
H.A.B.S. title abstractor

Lewis D. Cook
Supervising Historian

Approved:

Seymour Williams
SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, F.A.I.A.
District Officer

(160)